

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 2867

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECE, UN

SUBJECT: ECE - POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF SECRETARIAT

REF: USUN 1230; GENEVA 1680; GENEVA 1957; STATE 060838

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: I WAS SURPRISED AT THE ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS IN USUN 1230 WHICH ARGUES CASE FOR MOVE OF ECE TO VIENNA. NO REFERENCE HAS BEEN MADE THEREIN TO MESSAGES FROM THIS MISSION (GENEVA 1680; GENEVA 1957) SETTING FORTH VIEWS OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY STANOVNIK AND THIS MISSION. NOR IS THERE INDICATION THAT US DECISION ON THIS MATTER HAS BEEN COMMUNICATED TO DAVIDSON PER STATE 060838.

2. USUN FAILS TO MEET ESSENTIAL POINTS MADE BY STANOVNIK AND MISSION CONCERNING POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A MOVE AND DISRUPTION OF ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE BODIES IN THE UN SYSTEM. THE ISSUE IS NOT ONE OF INCONVENIENCE OF HARDSHIP TO ECE PERSONNEL BUT WHETHER IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE WEST, IN PARTICULAR THE US, TO DISRUPT AN ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS FUNCTIONED EFFECTIVELY IN GENEVA FOR 27 YEARS AND WHICH HAS AN IMPORTANT TECHNICAL ROLE TO PLAY IN FURTHERING DETENTE. END SUMMARY.

3. STANOVNIK MET INFORMALLY WITH CERTAIN DELEGATES DURING COURSE OF CURRENT ECE PLENARY SESSION TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE MOVE. HE POINTED OUT THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY LOSE 50 PERCENT OF HIS PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND THAT IT WOULD TAKE
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SEVERAL YEARS TO RECONSTITUTE THE SECRETARIAT. HE WOULD

ALSO LOSE UNPARALLELED RESEARCH SERVICES IN GENEVA AS WELL AS ADVANTAGE OF CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER ECONOMIC BODIES. (HE HAD INFORMED US PREVIOUSLY THAT STAFF LOSS WOULD BE PRIMARILY WESTERN WHICH WOULD UPSET DELICATE EAST-WEST BALANCE WHICH HE MAINTAINS IN THE SECRETARIAT).

4. AT A DINNER OF WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE ECE PLENARY, FRENCH AMBASSADOR FERNAND-LAURENT SAID THAT HE HAD ONLY RECENTLY HEARD REPORTS OF POSSIBLE MOVE OF ECE AND EXPRESSED STRONG OBJECTION. HE MADE SIMILAR ARGUMENTS AS STANOVNIK CONCERNING STAFF DISRUPTION AT EXPENSE OF WEST AND DIFFICULTY FACED BY SECRETARIAT AND DELEGATIONS IN COORDINATING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. (MOST DELEGATIONS USE PERSONNEL ON UNCTAD, GATT AND ECE MATTERS INTER-CHANGEABLY). IRISH DELEGATE ALSO EXPRESSED OPPOSITION AS DID REPRESENTATIVE OF EEC (KAWAN). I NOTED THAT USG ALSO OPPOSED TO THIS MOVE. VIEW WAS UNANIMOUS THAT GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BACK STANOVNIK.

5. I ALSO HAD OCCASION TO RAISE MATTER WITH AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR MARTINS DURING CHANCE MEETING AT ECE PLENARY SESSION. HE TOLD ME THAT "RUMORS" OF MOVE OF ECE TO VIENNA HAD REACHED HIM ONLY TWO WEEKS AGO AND THAT HE HAD SOUGHT INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS GOVERNMENT. HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO REPLY TO QUERIES THAT THE GOA HAS TAKEN NO INITIATIVE NOR DOES IT INTEND TO TAKE AN INITIATIVE TO SEEK TRANSFER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO VIENNA. SPACE MAY BE AVAILABLE IN THE FUTURE FOR ANY ORGANIZATION WHICH MAY WISH TO MAKE USE OF IT BUT IT IS GOA POLICY NOT TO SEEK TRANSFER OF BODIES WHICH DESIRE TO REMAIN WHERE THEY ARE. HE ADDED AS HIS PRIVATE VIEW THAT MOVE OF ECE OUT OF GENEVA WOULD NOT MAKE SENSE IN VIEW OF CLOSE RELATIONS TO OTHER ECONOMIC BODIES LOCATED HERE. HE ALSO TOLD ME THAT AUSTRIAN MISSION NY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO TRY TO DETERMINE SOURCE OF RUMORS.

6. IN ADDITION TO VIEWS OF GOA AND WESTERN VIEWS REPORTED ABOVE, I WOULD RECALL THAT STANOVNIK HAS REPORTED FIRM OPPOSITION OF YUGOSLAVIA AND GDR TO MOVE. I HAVE ALSO LEARNED FROM RELIABLE SOURCE THAT FINLAND AND NORWAY ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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OPPOSED.

7. I AM THEREFORE AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND FROM WHERE "ENORMOUS PRESSURE" STEMS FOR MOVE OF ECE OUT OF GENEVA. ON THE CONTRARY WE FIND ABSOLUTELY NO SENTIMENT FOR MOVE BY SECRETARIAT OR DELEGATIONS HERE AND IN FACT STRONG OPPOSITION. COUPLED WITH POLITICAL ARGUMENTS MADE PREVIOUSLY (GENEVA 1680) I FIND ARGUMENTS AGAINST A MOVE

OVERWHELMING AND NONE IN FAVOR.

8. THE UN HAS A STRONG STAKE IN ECE AS ONE OF THE BEST ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UN SYSTEM. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN STANOVNIK AND BELIEVE WE SHOULD SUPPORT HIM FULLY. UNFORTUNATELY, ABSTRACT ANALYSIS WHICH DISREGARDS THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REALITIES OF THIS SITUATION CAN ONLY UNDERMINE STANOVNIK AND WILL BE DETRIMENTAL TO US AND WESTERN INTERESTS. STANOVNIK HAS BEEN DISTRACTED TOO MUCH BY THIS MATTER AND MORALE IN THE SECRETARIAT IS ALREADY AFFECTED.

9. I WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED WHETHER THE INSTRUCTION CONTAINED IN STATE 060838 HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT. IN ADDITION, I RECOMMEND THAT AN EARLY APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE TO THE SYG TO CONFIRM THIS INSTRUCTION AND THAT OUR POSITION BE COORDINATED WITH OR REINFORCED BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS ADOPTING THE SAME POSITION. I BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO ACT EXPEDITIOUSLY TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO THE SYG AND UNDESIRABLE DEBATE IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE. DALE

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O - MR. JOHNSON.

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